

HUGH WATSON

1885-1959

With the death of Hugh Watson on 21 January, 1959, England lost one of its most meticulous and experienced malacologists, one whom it will be very difficult to replace for a long time.

Born in Newcastle-on-Tyne on 1 June, 1885, Hugh Watson was educated privately, and later read the Natural-Sciences Tripos at Trinity College, Cambridge, where, after a First in Part I in 1910, his health unfortunately deteriorated. Possessed of private means, he devoted the rest of his life to the study of Mollusca, and lived a very retired life in Cambridge.

In his early days, while he was still capable of travel on the continent, he collected widely both marine and non-marine Mollusca, but later he concentrated almost entirely on the study of non-marine gastropods. He was equally interested in both anatomy and shell form, as is shown by many of his papers. Among British Mollusca he was especially interested, early on, in such genera as *Vallonia* and *Vertigo*, while later on he became mainly interested in the Zonitidae, especially in the British species of slugs, although his publications ranged widely. But his interests extended far beyond this, especially to the study of certain African genera of Mollusca, notably the Planorbidae. In fact, his opinion was continually being consulted by malacologists from all over the world with whom he maintained a voluminous correspondence.

He was equally interested in problems of nomenclature and a series of papers on the correct names for the British non-marine Mollusca were published in 1943. Almost all of the names he suggested have been adopted in the latest British census. At the time of his death, he had just finished an exhaustive enquiry into the correct names for the European species of *Viviparus*.

To a lesser degree, he was concerned with the history of British species discovered by the study of the Mollusca of Pleistocene deposits and was always hoping for the discovery of new records both fossil and living, especially in the east of the country, of species found in adjacent parts of the continent. Unfortunately, his ill health prevented him from looking for these himself, although the care with which he studied doubtful Pleistocene specimens submitted to him was largely instrumental in

the establishment of several new British records.

Because of his retired life, Hugh Watson was not known personally to many other malacologists. He worked with extraordinarily great care, was fundamentally modest about his own knowledge, and would only commit himself after an exhaustive consideration of all literature and data bearing on the subject. He would not tolerate careless work by anyone, and would go to great pains to ensure that any work submitted to him for approval was as thorough and as accurate as his detailed knowledge could make it. This passion for accuracy made him sometimes a little unpopular with impatient prospective authors, but it was completely offset by the kindness which he showed in devoting much of his valuable time to their problems and instruction.

By his will, Hugh Watson left his specimens and his library to the University of Cambridge as well as a considerable sum of money for the furtherance of malacological research.

A list of his publications has been published in *Arch. Molluskenk.* 88:77-78.—B. W. SPARKS, University of Cambridge Dept. Geography, England.

NOTES AND NEWS

JAMES ZETEK. 1886-1959—James Zetek died June 2, 1959, at his home in Panama City. He married in 1914, and they are survived by a daughter, Ella Zetek, of Ecuador. Mr. Zetek was born Dec. 12, 1886, in Chicago, Illinois, and graduated from the state university in 1911. He went to the Canal Zone in the same year as entomologist for the zone's Sanitary Department, and later served similarly the Republic of Panama, which (1915-17) bestowed on him gold medals and a National Grand Prize. He also was connected with the Board of Health Laboratory and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. He helped found the scientific laboratory of Barro Colorado, in Lake Gatun, and became its curator in 1923. The island was set aside as a natural park in 1943, and from 1941 until near the time of his death he was Resident Manager of the Canal Zone Biological Area. (Cf. *Smithsonian Rept.* for 1947: 126-151).

Although primarily an authority on termites, he also was